The Priest

Edited By Priests For Priests

ecember, 1952

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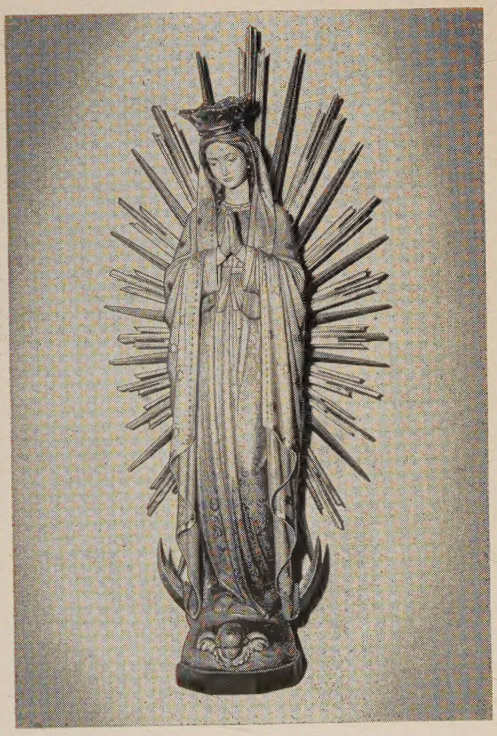

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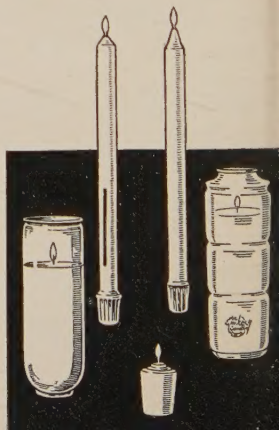

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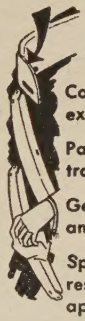

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THE PRIEST **DECEMBER, 1952** **VOL. 8 NO. 12**

"Take heed to thyself and to thy teaching: be earnest in them. For in so doing, thou wilt save both thyself and those who hear thee."
First Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy (iv. 16)

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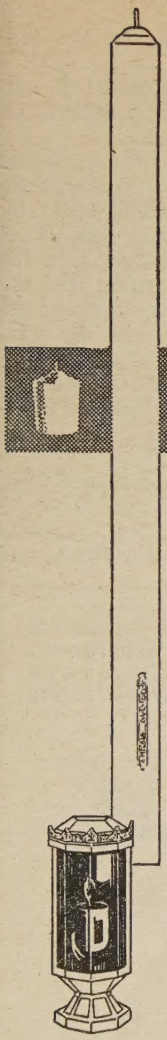

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If we chose Our Lady of Guadalupe, it is perhaps because she is an American and we should have more devotion to the Blessed Mother under that title.

Odds and Ends

WE HAVE heard a number of stories about Christmas sermons — some of them droll and some of them not. One curate, to our certain knowledge, used the Gospel story as the springboard for a lecture on birth prevention ("If Mary had said No . . ."). A seminary professor, helping out, quite inexplicably read the Midnight Mass congregation a half-hour examen on interior mortification, much to the discomfiture of the ministers waiting on the sedilia.

A friend of ours, whose supreme passion is sociology, preached on the housing shortage.

But our favorite story concerns the labor-minded Episcopalian minister who was much upset by a strike at the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. He climbed into his pulpit Christmas Morning and announced as his text, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass"— then laced into the Corporation and trounced it from here to purgatory and back.

* * *

To become an expert on Christmas, read *The Christmas Book* by Francis X. Weiser, S.J., recently published by Harcourt, Brace and

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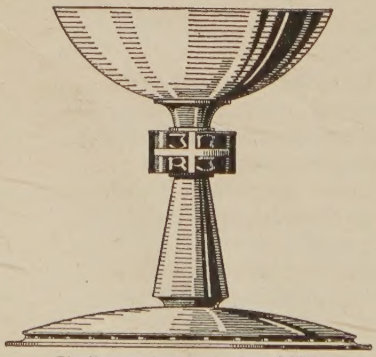

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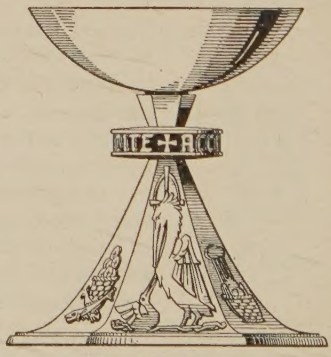

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Alma Savage called it to our attention. She served as agent in placing it with a publisher. The book would make a timely little presentation volume.

* * *

A friend of ours, teaching sociology, quite naturally as a young man married a suffragette. One of those early days, he drove her downtown to take part in a parade.

"You get in it, too, Henry!" she said.

"Now, Elsie—"

"Go ahead, Henry. Here," she

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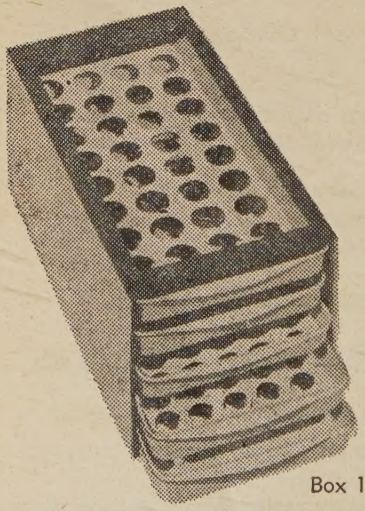

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said, thrusting a poster on a stick into his hands.

So Henry found himself marching up Fifth Avenue in a parade of suffragettes. At first he thought the onlookers were exceptionally sympathetic, until it dawned on him that they were laughing not with him but at him.

He finally got the drift of their attention and pulled down his placard for inspection. It read:

"Men Can Vote — Why Can't I?"

* * *

January 5-6, 1953 witnesses the fourth convention of the Mariological Society of America in Cleveland. This group of priests is devoted to the special study of current Mariological problems, and the results of their research are printed in *Marian Studies*, an annual publication. The topic for volume four (1953) is "The Queenship of Mary," which is discussed from all angles. The first three volumes treated of Basic Principles in Mariology, Mary's Co-Redemption, Mary's Spiritual Maternity respectively. (All four volumes can be obtained at two dollars apiece from J. Carol, O.F.M., Holy Cross Monastery, 600 Sound View Ave., Bronx 72, N.Y.)

* * *

We always think of Horace Greeley in connection with the famous injunction: "Go West, young man." To find out what else he said or did we'd have to drag out our American history. But recently we ran across another quotation that we now prefer to his more famous direction for success. Seems he knew a thing or two about human nature. To a minister who once chided him for losing his temper — which was prod-

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The first issue of a new journal published for priests, seminarians, religious and those of the laity interested in present-day theological thought will be off the press in early January. This is the only digest of its kind, printed in English, presenting a concise sampling of current periodical writings in theology.

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igious — he replied, not without reason, "You dammed pipsqueak, what do you know about it? I restrain more temper in ten minutes than you do in a month!"

* * *

What to give the nephews for Christmas? A dollar looks rather measly these days, yet five dollars is too steep.

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The McCarran-Walker Immigration Act

JUST a note, possibly to remove some confusion. The McCarran-Walker Immigration Act has been a kind of political football. There are so many extraneous issues involved in it that it has been pretty hard to focus attention on the merits or demerits of the act itself. Catholics have been found on both sides but only, we trust, because they have not been able to pierce the clouds of propaganda. There is really only one side. Oppose the Act.

The Act itself is based on racial theories, long exploded, that openly discriminate against people of

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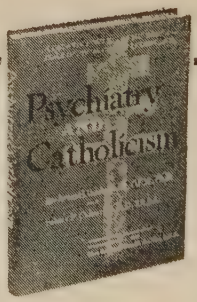

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Italian and Mediterranean extraction in favor of those of the mythical "Nordic" strain. It forbids the use of unfilled quotas of England and Germany, for example, by peoples of other races, and in effect tends to keep in "camps" as displaced persons large numbers of refugees of Italian ethnic origin from Greece, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and colonies in North Africa (some 700,000 of them — who can never be absorbed by overburdened Italy). It flatly refuses to open the door to the untold number of refugees who have fled from Communism into Western Germany. Victims of totalitarianism, they find that democracy has nothing to offer either.

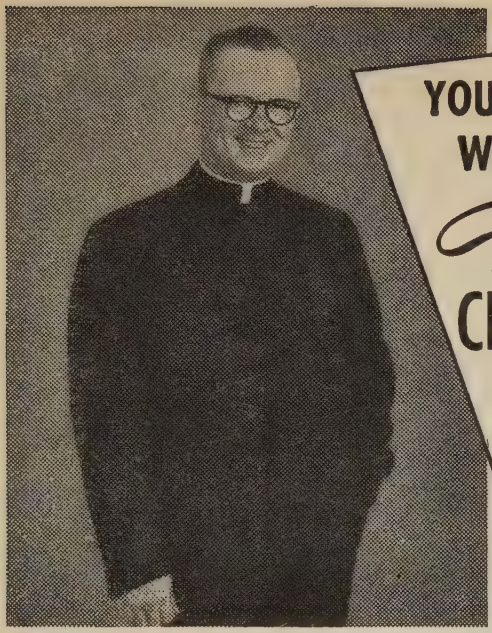
These really relevant points of opposition have often been smothered by propagandists for the Act who raise the threat of Communist infiltration, who "smear" the case against it by citing names of Pinkos like Bishop McConnell (not Communists, we say) and others who are also opposed to the Act.

Let us reply at once that any bill substituting for the McCarran Act will have to be drawn up carefully; that, again, we do not espouse the flooding of the labor market with unassimilable foreigners, or the uncontrolled admission of everyone who knocks at our door.

Our position has been eloquently stated by several members of the Hierarchy.

Said Archbishop Cushing in an address to the President's Commission on Immigration and Naturalization, "To sanction Racism after we have fought a bitter and costly war to defeat it is nothing short of fantastic."

Continued on page 950



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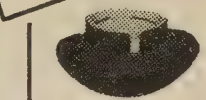

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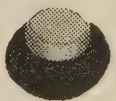

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The Priest

Vol. VIII DECEMBER, 1952 No. 12

Editorial Comment

'Spend And Be Spent . . .'

ON the third centenary of the canonization of Francis Xavier Pope Pius XI both described the Saint and summarized his career when he wrote of him that "in the interest of souls (he) many times traversed vast expanses of land and sea, was the first to bring the name of Christ to the nation of Japan, suffered many dangers and underwent incredible trials, administered the saving waters of Baptism to countless souls and performed innumerable miracles of every kind."

December third of this year marks the fourth centenary of the death of the Saint on the barren little island of Shangchwan — Sancian being the name the West gave it from a Latinized version coined by the Jesuits for their correspondence homeward. He was only forty-six but he was a spent man; burnt out physically from those same "incredible trials" of which the Pope wrote, if still burning brightly and intensely within. He had been waiting impatiently for means to take him across the six miles that lay between him and the mainland, six miles, too, that most probably separated him from actual martyrdom. Dread stories were coming out of China about the horrors that awaited foreigners who disobeyed the edict of the king and ventured to violate the ban against them. Saint Francis dealt characteristically with such tales of danger in one of his last letters: "The danger of all dangers would be to lose trust and confidence in the mercy of God . . . We are absolutely determined to go to China."

The year fifteen hundred and fifty-two was for Francis the last of the twenty or more fairly incredible years that followed upon his providential encounter with his fellow Basque, Inigo de Loyola, at the University of Paris. A gay and improvident young nobleman of poor but proud family, his head filled with thoughts of pleasure and romance and dreams of glory, he little dreamed that the older,

somewhat uncouth, and by then-current standards fairly illiterate, Inigo would make in him his greatest catch for the new Society of Jesus (which then did not even exist) and for the spread of the Gospel (which then concerned Francis not at all). It had indeed not been an easy conquest. Ignatius —as he was later named, probably by the Registrar of the University of Paris—was supposed to have remarked that Xavier was "the stiffest clay he had ever handled." Certainly Xavier was his greatest masterpiece: the most outstanding missioner the Society ever produced—no small distinction—and one of the greatest missioners of all time, compared not unfavorably to St. Paul himself, chosen by Pope Pius X as patron of the Propagation of the Faith.

His distinctive work was to found the missions of the Society in India and he went about it in a distinctive way. The story is quite familiar of how in Goa he went about the streets and squares with a bell in his hand crying out to all to come to "the instruction." Not quite so familiar are the details of his work, the back-breaking toil—his trips to the foul lazaretto each Sunday to say Mass for the lepers, absolutions day and night for the throngs that came to him, his endless lessons in 'pidgin' Portuguese adapted to the ears of his ignorant hearers, his nights spent in the hospital where he would sleep on the floor next to the sickest patient whose "minimo gemito" served to rouse him from his rest, his daily calls at the city's three prisons which reaked with filth, physical and moral.

This was the pattern of his ministry, that he should "spend and be spent." It never changed no matter where he was or what new conditions he might encounter elsewhere. How could it? It was the pattern laid down by St. Paul and followed ever since by any missioner worthy of the name so far as his strength and the measure of Grace enable him to do so.

There Is No Other Way

External conditions may change almost completely as generations roll by and scenes shift from one continent to another; but the essentials, never! Bishop Ford, modern martyr in that China Xavier never reached, adhered to the venerable rubric in 1952; we have his paraphrase of it on record:

"Grant us, Lord, to be the doorstep by which the multitudes may come to worship Thee. And if, in the saving of their souls, we are ground underfoot and spat upon and worn out, at least we shall have served Thee in some small way in helping pagan souls; we shall have become the King's Highway in pathless China."

It is likely that St. Vincent de Paul had something similar

in mind when he counseled his men to follow Xavier, as he sent them to the wilds of Madagascar. We cannot believe that he was concerned merely with the externals when he laid on them the solemn injunction: "The first and necessary thing for you to do is to take for your model upon your missionary voyaging the great and holy Francis Xavier." Vincent de Paul, and Olier with him, knew what was essential and what accidental: their own France, which both had traversed, or the exotic Orient yielded to the same force, the appeal of total dedication.

We who read of these stout heroes of other days, quite naturally, tend to take things for granted. We accept the fact of success; we dismiss a Xavier with the thought, perhaps unstated, that *he* was a Saint and as such flooded with the flow of divine Grace (as if we were Calvinists!), we implicity assume that things are different "nowadays," we lose ourselves in amiable delusions of self, and, priest or layman, dodge the eternal challenge of such lives with the comforting assurance that we are ordinary. "Human, all too human," as Nietzsche said with something quite different in mind. But this is getting away from the subject.

"Christ his Lord, his life, his love, his everything" — the phrase is borrowed from Fr. John Broderick, S.J., whose magnificent biography has appeared in time for the centenary*; there in a few words is the key to the life of Francis Xavier.

This is what captivated his audiences who, Fr. Broderick tells us, "may have laughed at him to start with," for he did not hesitate to incorporate the tricks of the carnival barker into his presentation of the Gospel; "Soon a hush would fall upon them because the love that shone in his dark bewitching eyes and burned on his stammering lips spoke to their hearts so eloquently."

Stammering lips? We have so often heard of the great linguistic gifts the Saint employed as he roved from Goa to Sancian, tramping through Southern India, Malaya, and the Celebes, risking his life on unseaworthy Portuguese carracks in violent storms. The fact seems to be that Xavier spoke not so much the local language as the language of boundless love that passed over linguistic barriers. We find him butchering local place names, twisting almost beyond indentification names of princes and rulers, spelling most often by some kind of impatient guess work, laboriously memorizing his simple little talks and hoping to be understood. In Fr. Broderick's judg-

*St. Francis Xavier, by John Broderick, S.J., New York, The Wicklow Press, pp. 548, Index, $5.00.

ment, "Except possibly on a few very rare occasions, and these perhaps explicable by the now scientifically accredited hypothesis of telepathy, it is a mere legend that God endowed him with a miraculous 'gift of tongues.'" No matter, really; for God had endowed him with so much else!

It is quite understandable that the centuries would encrust his name with loving legends. He had scarcely died when of a sudden the world knew that they had been dealing with a Saint. The very arrival of his body at Goa set off demonstrations of wild enthusiasm. The apotheosis began immediately; the Viceroy and the humblest Kaffir slave were caught alike in the emotional upsurge, and the Dominican friar deputed to preach his eulogy found that he could not be heard above the huge swell of sobs. He himself left the pulpit in tears.

Naturally enough the myth-makers took over—within the Society itself, where however they were counteracted by critical fellow-members. Father Broderick has allied himself with those living confreres of the Saint who make the search for accuracy supreme. Unquestionably there were authentic miracles of the first rank, those introduced at the Cause, and for that matter very likely others. The famous "miracle" of the crab is one which Father Broderick will not accept, even though he parts company here with his model and great hagiographer, Schurhammer. As the story goes, Xavier lost his crucifix overboard only to have it returned to him the next day on the shore by a helpful crab. This amiable story Father Broderick, followed the Bollandists Pére Delehaye and Pére Peeters, attributes to a confusion with Japanese mythology.

It is, though, not our purpose to speculate on the number or kinds of miracles Francis Xavier may have worked. That is the province of the specialists. *The* miracle is the man Xavier! —G.J.G.

The Killing Comma

A misplaced comma caused the murder of Joan of Burgundy, wife of Philip the Fair. Before committing the crime, the conspirators read a note from their leader: "Regem interficere nolite, timere bonum est."

The ringleader's secretary, however, had misplaced the comma so that the directions read: "Regem interficere nolite timere, bonum est."—Contributed.

Parish-Centered Cana

Parish Communions up 12%

Bernard F. Meyer, M.M.

IN the Archdiocese of Newark the Cana Movement has taken on a form which seems to have special significance for vivifying parish life as well as restoring the Christian family. Beginning in Sacred Heart Parish, Bloomfield, two and a half years ago, it has now spread to all parts of the Archdiocese. Father Harry C. Sherer, assistant pastor at Sacred Heart and chairman of the Archdiocesan Cana Committee makes the following points.

"It is very unfortunate that most parish priests do not think of the Cana Conference as a parish activity, but have come to regard Cana work as the field of the specialist and lecturing priest rather than of the pastoral priest. Consequently, our people are looking to alumni-groups, diocesan organizations or other non-parish agencies for the guidance to live a supernatural marriage.

"They are forced to seek outside the parish this new form of the apostolate which so much appeals to them because it meets a real need of the day. Yet the life of the parish, which today faces so many disintegrating influences, needs Cana as a parish-centered rather than diocesan-centered activity. This has been abundantly verified by our experience in this and other parishes.

"We parish priests have more opportunity to study marriage and to sympathetically present the attendant problems than any other group of men in the world. We are competent to deal with any sacrament, marriage included. The quickest way to our people's hearts is by showing an interest in their family life, and only the parish priest can adequately do this.

"The Cana Conferences for married couples held in this parish have not been isolated one-day activities like a retreat. Not only are they given by the parish priests, but they are the beginning of a completely integrated parish program for the family. This program, in cooperation with the existing societies of the parish (Cana is not a society), develops a sense of 'togetherness' among the couples as Catholics, making them not only more conscious of what Catholic life should be, but also more aware of the needs of others and ready to help, so that love of neighbor becomes a concrete reality."

Four Hundred Couples

In the last two and a half years, 400 couples of Sacred

Father Meyer can be reached at Maryknoll, New York.

Heart Parish have participated in one of fifteen Cana Conences given by Father Sherer, and almost invariably they have been enthusiastic about how this direction of Catholic teaching specifically to themselves makes their marriage "come alive," and reveals joys and beauties that they had scarcely even suspected could exist in the humdrum of daily responsibilities. One woman's reaction was typical. "We've been married twenty-three years, and haven't been so happy since our honeymoon." Her husband was less demonstrative, but equally convincing. "Why didn't we hear of this before?"

In the life of the parish, the membership of the various societies has considerably increased, especially of younger couples, and college graduates show a much more active participation. Such societies as the Holy Name and the Altar and Rosary are no longer considered as only separate activities of men and women. The "Mr. and Mrs." team consciousness developed by Cana causes husbands and wives to take a deep interest in the society to which the other belongs. The number of Communions in the parish increased during the past year by 12%, again particularly among young couples.

The close tie-in of Cana with parish societies may be seen in the fact that the first Conference of the parish was sponsored by the Holy Name men with the assistance of their wives. To insure the widest possible appeal a general rally, called "Mr. and Mrs. Night," was sponsored in May, 1949. Father Joseph Cantillon, S. J., was invited to give a sample Cana talk and answered questions to show the couples what they might expect. The enthusiastic response was, "Why couldn't we have one here?" "Mr. and Mrs. Night" has now become an annual affair, known also as the Cana-Holy Name Social, and the special guests are prospective Cana couples and Holy Name men, who are encouraged to sign up on the spot.

Organization

As an interest in Cana spread to other parishes, the Newark Archdiocesan Cana Committee was set up, affiliated through pre-Cana with the already existing C. Y. O. of the Archdiocese. The Committee consists of two priests and two married couples, the latter called Organizer Couples, from each of the four counties of the Archdiocese, together with the county C. Y. O. directors and three priest-consultors. The Committee is ready to assist a parish to set up Cana, but the actual work must be done by the priests and couples of the parish itself.

This has immense psychological value for priests as well as laity, since people always take a deeper interest in what they

do for themselves. With the kind of program developed by the Committee there is no danger that they will keep a detached attitude. They become personally involved; the ideas are no longer merely those of someone else, but become their own, and as such the participants will stand up for them, and work to make them succeed.

The first step is to get seven or eight couples of the parish to hold several meeting in order to weld them into a team to organize the Conferences. The priest-director of Cana in the parish will know whom to choose. The existing parish societies are asked to cooperate, three or four couples on the organizing committee being chosen from them, the others from people who do not belong to any society. For the organizers, pick balanced couples, both capable of development, both with good potentialities. They need not be highly educated, but good workers, able to talk to people, tactful.

They should also be active couples; some of the best are those who think they are too busy. Cana can become their number-one interest, take them away from bowling, poker, even drink. Father Sherer reports that several members of Alcoholics Anonymous have come to the conclusion that parish Cana can be one of their best helps, by improving their home life and participation in the parish, taking them out of themselves.

The meetings of the organizing committee are held in a private home, never in the parish hall. Cana is built on the family and that atmosphere must be emphasized. At the first meetings stress is laid on what Cana can do both for the family and the parish, to help the Holy Name, Rosary and other societies, develop parish solidarity, bring newcomers into active participation. The parish priest or his representative must be present at this meeting, for all moves are subject to his approval.

Preparatory Rally

The committee does not proceed directly to set up the Cana Conference, but first organizes a general parish rally, the "Mr. and Mrs. Night," to sell the idea. Perhaps one of the existing parish organizations will sponsor it, as the Holy Name does at Bloomfield. A letter announcing the rally is sent to every family of the parish. It should sound good to all of them: the Knights of Columbus, the Holy Name, the Altar and Rosary, and the Nocturnal Adoration Societies, to the young couples that want to meet others, to those that have heard of Cana. It emphasizes that Cana can help husbands and wives attain greater happiness, aid parents in training children, and bring new members to the various societies.

The letter is followed by telephone or personal calls inviting the couples to attend the rally. Those on the committee who belong to parish societies get several couples of their society to help invite the members. The others enlist couples from different sections of the parish to assist in contacting those who do not belong to societies. Names are secured from the baptismal register for the several previous years, the records of the school or catechism classes, and the parish census lists. In the average parish these are the great potential; for example, in one parish of 1,300 families, only about sixty couples were active in parish societies.

The rally should also be given publicity in the church on several preceding Sundays. If only a little time can be allotted in the announcements, bring it into sermons, perhaps give one or more sermons on marriage, a sort of preview of the Conference to stimulate interest. If there is a parish bulletin it can contribute to the publicity, or a leaflet may be distributed at the door; these provide a visual and permanent reminder. Main reliance, however, should be on the letter and the personal follow-up.

As the couples enter the hall for the rally, they are met by those who contacted them and conducted, not to chairs, but to the side of the room, where they are introduced to others so that they will get acquainted. One does not say, "Mr. and Mrs. Jones," but, "Bill and Mary Jones." When time comes for the rally to begin, they are asked to sit down with their new friends. It is a basic principle of all Cana gatherings that every couple should make new friends; the common tendency to sit down with old friends should be avoided. The committee must act as hosts, so that strangers may be made to feel welcome.

One couple act as chairman of the rally. A priest is also on the platform, and several couples who have made Cana Conferences, not chosen as public speakers but ordinary people like the audience. In Newark the Archdiocesan Cana Committee will provide a priest and the panel of couples. The priest spends about twenty minutes explaining what the Cana Conference is. Then he calls on the couples to tell what appealed to them in the Conference, what they feel they got out of it, and encourages questions from the floor. Where he probably got none, now they come thick and fast, because it is the laity with the laity.

Before the rally closes, the date of the next Conference is announced and those who wish to make it are asked to sign up before they leave the hall. Father Sherer limits each Conference to 25 couples, save in exceptional circumstances, as

the ideal size to address and for fostering friendships and informality. If a large number sign up the Conference is held in sections, at stated intervals, and special invitations sent out for each section.

The Conference

It is most important to choose the 25 couples, particularly for the first Conference, to represent a cross-section of the parish, including some "from the other side of the tracks," even mixed marriages or marginal Catholics, but both husband and wife must attend. The impression must never get around that it is for the elite, the "faithful few." As each group makes the Conference they will tell friends all about it, and many who would not sign up at first now give their names. With a little encouragement the movement is bound to grow, but everyone must be made to feel welcome, wanted. This is one reason why formal, printed or mimeographed invitations are sent out to each of the 25 couples, followed by phone or personal calls.

From among these 25 couples, an arrangement-committee for the Conference is chosen. For this, five to seven couples will be required, and in their choice avoid existing cliques or those where only one party is interested. They meet in the home of one of their number and take on the job of sending out formal invitations; making large, readable name tags with the first name conspicuous; procuring cakes and coffee; informing the local papers; and making a donations box. After Mass on the day of the Conference, the husbands set out the chairs and refreshments table in the parish hall, while the wives are home preparing the family dinner.

The Conference is held on Sunday, beginning about 2:30 and lasting three and one-half hours. The invitations urge that each couple making it attend Mass and receive Holy Communion together that morning. As a couple enter the hall, someone of the committee-couples greets them, gives them name tags, and sees that they are introduced and mingle with the earlier arrivals. Much of the success of the Conference rests on the friendliness and informality attending it, and on the opportunity the couples have to become really acquainted.

It is also important to get all the couples to share in some way, even though small, in the responsibility. Besides those on the committee, several others are asked to bring cakes, some are recruited to help with the serving, the men are asked to carry out the chairs after the Conference. Even those not specifically called upon can do their bit by dropping a small amount in the donations box. This is used to defray the cost of printing in-

vitations, circulating pamphlets, buying coffee and paper goods. It is a rule at Sacred Heart that all making Cana, or who have made it, are called upon frequently to do something that helps them feel they are making a visible contribution to the good of all.

The Program

The priest conducting the Conference usually gives two talks and ends up with a question period. After the first talk, the couples have a chance to visit, talk over what they have heard, and prepare questions to drop in the box. After the second talk, cake and coffee are served, while the committe couples continue introductions, watch out for those who may be lonely and, for the period to follow, collect more question cards. There is seldom time to take up all the questions, but by grouping them according to subjects most can be satisfactorily answered.

The climax of the Conference comes as the couples go to the church for Benediction, the renewal of their marriage vows, and giving each other the nuptial kiss before the Blessed Sacrament. That this reliving of their first pledge to each other is a very important part of the Conference is shown by the shining faces, misty eyes and clasped hands of even the longest married. Those who have made the Conference become zealous promoters among their friends, and soon the left-over waiting list begins to get new names. The growth of Cana depends especially on this word-of-mouth advertising.

Since each Conference is for only half a day, in order to cover the ground thoroughly the program provides that the couples make a series of four Conferences, one a year, designated as Conference I, II, III, and IV. This plan is more convenient for the couples and is also good pedagogy, because it follows the gradual development of their Cana life. The general topic of Conference I is "Husband-Wife Relationship"; Conference II, "Parent-Child Relationship"; Conference III, "Corporate Spirituality" of couples in the family; Conference IV, "Apostolic Spirituality" in the parish and community.

Follow-Up

One result of the Conferences has been that all feel the desire to associate more closely with other Cana couples. In addition to the annual Cana-Holy Name Social already mentioned, other social activities are an annual picnic and a Christmas party, though on account of inadequate space the last has had to be limited to those who have just made a Conference that year, unless it be divided into several gatherings. Some, who wished to meet more frequently, started Card Groups, meeting once a month. Father Sher-

er suggested that they should have some special Cana purpose, so a tax of $2.00 per couple for each meeting is collected, of which a part is given as Christmas gifts to babies of Cana couples born during the year and the remainder turned over to Father Sherer for distribution at his discretion to some Cana couple or couples who he knows need some extra help.

Sacred Heart Parish now has two well-developed Cana Services and others are projected. Those in operation are a Baby Sitting Bank and a Cana Assistance Pool. Volunteer Cana couples take care of the children of those who attend Conference I, but for every other occasion, Cana or not, couples may apply to the Bank. This is run by one couple, who will secure the help of a Cana husband and/or wife for their children at any time. Payment is in kind, that is, the time spent by the sitters is credited to their own account on which they may draw, while the couple who requested them have their account debited for that length of time and will be called to make it up when someone else is in need.

The Cana Assistance Pool is the answer to the big problem of finding out which of several hundred Cana couples need help and which are best able to give it. By means of a questionnaire sent to everyone who has attended a Conference, the couple in charge have compiled a register of those who have volunteered to take on some specific kind of family assistance whenever they are called. The questionnaire runs something like this: Can you prepare the home for the return of the mother with the new baby? Provide transportation? Fix a one-dish meal? Take the children into your home for a day or two? Do the washing and ironing? A couple in need of help have only to phone the Pool; and when such a situation comes to the attention of another Cana couple they are urged to report it.

"Action Club"

As Cana developed in the parish, many couples felt a desire for a more formal discussion of family life, and especially for positive Cana action. The result was the formation of Cana Family Action Clubs, which in the words of one couple, "are proving to be one of the more valuable undertakings yet begun."

Beginning a year and a half ago with four Clubs of six couples each, there are now seven senior Clubs, with a total of 40 couples, and eight beginners' Clubs, with 20 couples from the parish and 20 from other parishes to introduce the Clubs there. The Clubs use the Workbook Series, "Mr. and Mrs.," by the writer of this article, who will be glad to furnish information about them.

Clerical Salaries

Mr. Floyd Keeler

A comparison of Catholic and Protestant emoluments

ONE of the favorite "indoor sports" of the Catholic clergy is commiserating themselves by a comparison of their meagre salaries with those received by the Protestant ministers, but this comparison more often than not leaves out a lot of things that make it a fair estimate. When a priest tells you he gets $50, $75 or $100 a month salary, and his Protestant neighbor gets, say, $4,000 or $5,000 a year, it looks like a big discrepancy. But is it?

Now I am well aware that there are some Protestant churches which do pay enormous salaries. Back in my own day (nearly 40 years ago), I knew of two congregations which paid $25,000 and one which paid $35,000 a year. Even in these inflationary times, that "ain't hay." Probably those in charge of these places get more nowadays, I don't know; but just as a foreigner might get the idea that all Americans live in luxury because he saw pictures of our millionaires' establishments, so we can equally get a false impression by thinking of figures such as these. They were (and are) most exceptional.

The author, formerly a Protestant minister, is now a seminarian at Mt. St. Mary's, Emmitsburg.

I spoke a moment ago of $4,000 or $5,000 a year. I doubt very much if the average is anywhere near that. In some of the poorer sects it is almost taken for granted that their ministers will supplement their income from their charges by doing outside work. I know of one who sold insurance on the side, and another who drove a bus for a living.

Another thing we have to remember is that the salary of the Catholic priest is in addition to his living. He has his home and its "appurtenances" (to quote the income tax line) whereas the Protestant minister has none of these except possibly (not always) a parsonage free of rent. Except among the Methodists it is almost never furnished, so the minister has to provide for all that.

In addition, the vast majority of Protestant ministers are married men with families, and they do cost money. He has to provide for them out of his over-all salary which we quoted. Besides, he pays income tax on the whole thing, and in these days that cuts down to a serious extent the net amount left for anyone to use.

In addition to the above things, our priests are practically assured of at least $25 a month in Mass stipends (usual-

ly it's more) and there are other honoraria given them, whereas the Protestant minister has practically nothing of the sort, except an occasional marriage fee. Of course if he happens to have any really wealthy parishioners, he will now and then get more.

I remember once being given $100 by a man whom, with his wife, I had prepared and presented for confirmation, but that was the one time in my twelve years' ministry that anything like that happened.

Seldom is anything even offered for a funeral. In fact I have more than once spent my own money for railroad fare to officiate at a burial and received nothing more tangible than the thanks of the family.

Now happily the majority of our ministerial converts seem to be men who have had considerably more than the usual salaries, and they have generally made a good deal of sacrifice in becoming Catholics — which is especially true of the ones who are married, so few of us can be accused of having come into the Church for any ulterior motive. I was not one of those more fortunate ones, but if you could see some of the "salaries" I have received since my becoming a Catholic, I don't think anyone would accuse me of having done it for money!

Now I am not saying that our priests get too much—heavens, no! In fact, knowing the demands upon them and their generosity in meeting them, I often wonder how on earth they manage at all on what they have, but then it is not fair to quote the salaries they get and salaries such as are paid to the average non-Catholic minister on the same level.

The Lord, through our people, takes good care of us. So maybe it's better that we are for the most part, poor. We might get proud or avaricious, otherwise, and may God preserve us from that!

Mince-pies

Mince-pies at Christmas at the present time are round in shape, but the older form was oblong. Selden (d. 1654), in his Table Talk, when speaking of Christmas, says: "The Coffin of our Christmas-Pies, in shape long, is in imitation of the Cratch" (manger). In 1644 the Puritans forbade the observance of Christmas. Soldiers were ordered to break into houses to see that no food such as was formerly eaten at Christmas was used. Plum-pudding and mince-pies were amongst the things forbidden, and we may therefore rank them as coming down to us from Catholic times.—Horne.

Miracles and Mystics

External wonders need not indicate true holiness

Hilda C. Graef

HOW great is the interest at present in miracles and mystical phenomena can be measured by the number of books published on such subjects. In March and April of this year alone, three relevant works have appeared, two by French, one by an English author, representing journalism, medicine, and theology respectively. The first is a translation by Lancelot C. Sheppard of Jean Helle's book on *Miracles* (David McKay Company, $3.50); the other is *Mystiques et faux mystiques* by Dr. Jean Lhermitte, and the third a collection of the late Fr. Thurston's essays entitled *The Physical Phenomena of Mysticism.*

All these works approach their subject critically, employing both theological and psychological criteria in their effort to separate the wheat from the chaff. Perhaps the most unsatisfactory of the three is that by Jean Helle. In the opinion of the present reviewer it is vitiated by a fundamental mistake which is very common, but which is none the less fatal in any work dealing with this particular subject. It is the confusion between miracles and what is commonly called "mystical phenomena," but which one would rather describe as psychological phenomena sometimes, though by no means always, accompanying mystic experiences.

St. Thomas defines a miracle as an event "which takes place against the order of the whole created nature" (quod fit praeter ordinem totius naturae creatae, S.Th.I.q.110.a.4 corp.), and, in a later article of the Summa, he has a very significant caveat, namely: "A man, also, inasmuch as he does something that is above the faculty and knowledge of another, leads another to admire what he does, so that he somehow seems to work a miracle" (ibid.I.q.114.a.4 corp.).

Now this is precisely what happens to M. Helle, as to so many others. He sees a "mystic" doing or suffering things which he himself could not do, and therefore considers them miraculous. He does this, for example, in the case of Catherine Emmerich, whose book he calls not only "inspired" (?) but also "by no means the least important record of the miracles of the last century" (p.195). Now Catherine Emmerich had visions, "expiatory sufferings" and other experiences very much in the manner of Theresa Neu-

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Miss Graef was recently the center of a controversy concerning Theresa Neumann of Konnersreuth.

mann, to whom the author compares her, to the disadvantage of the latter. He calls Catherine's experiences miraculous, but rejects Theresa's as manifestations of hysteria, no doubt after having read the books on her by Poray-Madeyski and Fr. Siwek, S.J. But their experiences are precisely the same; and he calls Theresa a "Commentator of the Passion" and Catherine a "Narrator of the Gospels."

Now on what principle does he assign a natural cause to the experiences of the one and a supernatural one to those of the other, going so far as to call Catherine's visions repeatedly an "inspired" book? It was certainly the good fortune of Catherine Emmerich to have found a distinguished poet, Clemens Brentano, to write down her experiences, so that it is impossible to distinguish what is her own from what is the poetic imagination of Brentano (which may account for Helle's use of the word "inspired"); but even in the few extracts published by Helle we find most of the characteristics of this visionary literature, and very suspicious indeed is the remark of her "guardian angel" that "these things must be told, for no one has yet received nor ever will, a favour as great as yours" (p.200). This extraordinary exaggeration alone should have sufficed to make the author a little less trustful in her case.

The first necessity is, however, to distinguish what is a true miracle from other phenomena whether supernatural or not, for "supernatural" and "miraculous" are two totally different things. As we have seen, St. Thomas defines the miracle as being "praeter ordinem totius naturae creatae" in which he includes, of course, all created spirits as well. Leaving these out of account, as they do not concern us in this connection, it has to be asked who is the proper person to decide what is against the laws of nature as generally understood today, that is, disregarding angelic agencies. Here the obvious answer is: the man who studies nature, i.e. the scientist, the person who seems best qualified to avoid taking for miraculous what is, according to our second quotation from St. Thomas, not a true miracle but only "above the faculty and knowledge of another."

The Miraculous And The Supernatural

There are a good many Catholics nowadays who are afraid of science. Now it is one thing to reject the "dogmatic" refusal of materialist scientists to admit God and the supernatural order altogether, and quite another to be afraid of any true findings of science that result in explaining certain facts as natural which have hitherto been attributed to super- or preternatural causes. There is no doubt that certain minds

find it pleasant to live in a world where there is a constant irruption of the supernatural, just as there are others who are seriously upset if any event seems to point to a Being beyond their rationalistic universe —but the question is not what pleases one or the other type of mind, but what is true.

Now it should be a real assurance to Catholics that in Benedict XIV's great work *De beatificatione* most modern natural interpretations of what is popularly deemed to be miraculous have already been anticipated, even to prolonged *inedia,* and that, moreover, for an investigation of miracles, whether at Lourdes or for beatification purposes, the most stringent tests of modern science are followed. However much certain of the faithful may be afraid of the findings of modern science, the official authorities of the Church are not; on the contrary, they welcome and give all the facilities to scientists to investigate miracles, and only proclaim their authenticity when science has confessed its inability to find a natural cause. This is well brought out in Helle's book, especially in his chapter on Lourdes, where he gives the five signs which are required before a miracle can be admitted.

If he had reflected on the significance of these signs before calling quite different phenomena "miraculous" it would have been to the great advantage of his book. For the "mystical phenomena" discussed in it are not at all "miraculous," and should have been dealt with under a different heading. For visions, ecstasies, and other mystical phenomena are not "praeter ordinem totius naturae creatae" but can be brought about by natural causes, by the human imagination as well as by diabolic or angelic agency. In fact, they present a different problem; not whether they are miraculous or not, but whether they are caused supernaturally, that is to say by divine grace, or naturally, for example by a neurotic temperament, or preternaturally, that is to say by the devil.

A Difficult Distinction

Now to distinguish with any degree of certainty between these possible causes is extremely difficult—so difficult, indeed, that St. John of the Cross thought it the safest course both for the recipient of these phenomena and for the spiritual director to reject them altogether, because they are really quite irrelevant to the soul's progress in sanctity. Only one thing can be said with a fair degree of certainty: if these phenomena immediately cause the soul to think much of herself, if she does not through them progress in sanctity, then the divine origin is very unlikely. God is not the origin of

"gifts" that have detrimental effects on the soul's virtue. But St. John of the Cross teaches that even if they come from God they may sometimes have the opposite effect from what has been intended, and here he warns especially confessors and directors. Their responsibility is very great; for by showing inordinate interest in such "revelations" of their penitents and by manifesting their esteem both for these "graces" and for their recipients, they can cause the soul untold harm. One wonders what he would have said about the present practice of lecturing on such doubtful manifestations, fanning not only the pride of the subject in question, but also the unwholesome interest so many of us take in them.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that priests should be conversant not only with the principles of mystical theology as laid down especially by the Mystical Doctor, but also with the findings of modern psychology, which has perfectly natural explanations for phenomena hitherto regarded as inexplicable except by assuming super- or preternatural causes.

Father Thurston's Work

Here the late Father Herbert Thurston, S.J., has done magnificent pioneer work, and it is to be hoped that the collection of his essays mentioned above will find its way into every seminary library and into every religious house of studies. Many readers, both clerical and lay, will probably be shocked to learn that—always excepting St. Francis, whose stigmata seem to be in a category by themselves—he has "not yet met with a single case of stigmatization in a subject who was previously free from neurotic symptoms," and he includes explicitly Padre Pio. The passage is noteworthy.

"The holiness of Padre Pio or of Gemma Galgani," he writes, "may be real enough, and yet this fact is not inconsistent with a liability to the occurrence of suggestion neuroses, manifested at times by startling phenomena." This fact has to be kept in mind, especially by those whose task it is to direct such souls, and it is significant that such holy people as Padre Pio or St. Gemma Galgani have constantly encountered contradiction and suffering on their way, the invariable means of purification by which saints are fashioned.

The opinion of Fr. Thurston, that stigmata are not so much a sign of sanctity as of neurosis, seems now to be very generally accepted among critical theologians and doctors. The book by the German Catholic doctor, F. Schleyer, *Die Stigmatisation mit den Blutmalen* (1948), investigates a large number of cases, both of canonized and of uncanonized stigmatics, and comes to the same conclusion, namely, that neurotic symptoms

are never absent before the stigmata develop.

Lhermitte, on the other hand, distinguishes between what he calls "stigmatisation frauduleuse," including, among others, under this heading Domenica Lazzari, Louise Lateau, and Theresa Neumann, and true stigmatization, to which he seems to reckon all the cases of canonized saints, though his language is not always quite clear on this point. But we fully agree with his conclusion that even if stigmatization is "mystical," it is but an accidental experience and has in any case to be judged by its fruits. What seems perfectly assured is that stigmatization, whether in conjunction with sanctity or not, *presupposes* a certain physical condition. Saints with a perfectly normal nervous system do not exhibit it, despite their intense devotion to the Passion. We need only think of a St. Bernard, St. Dominic, St. John of the Cross, or St. Paul of the Cross.

The Essence vs. The Externals

There is today a great interest in mysticism, but unfortunately it is only too often restricted to the external phenomena and disregards its essence. The external phenomena, as we have seen, are somewhat deceptive; and this applies not only to the stigmata but also to visions, revelations, and other unusual occurrences. Perhaps one of the most instructive cases, which shows how very right is St. John of the Cross when he warns against trusting in visions over and over again, is that of St. Catherine of Siena. Now St. Catherine was not only a very great mystic, but also an extremely gifted and intelligent woman. And yet it happened to her that she declared that Our Lady revealed to her that she had not been immaculately conceived.

How was this error possible? The explanation is simple. In those days, when the doctrine had not yet been defined, the opposed view was equally permissible, and the Dominicans, to whose Third Order St. Catherine belonged, were defending precisely the opinion which St. Catherine asserted Our Lady had told her was true. It is quite clear, then, that this "revelation" of an erroneous theological opinion was no more than an illusion of St. Catherine. Now if this could happen to a saint of such stature, how many errors may not be contained in the revelations of other mystics, whether canonized or not?

What is one, for example, to say of a statement, found in a very uncritical book by the non-Catholic scholar, Montague Summers, *The Physical Phenomena of Mysticism,* where he says that "a remarkable revelation of the Bavarian ecstatica, Theresa Neumann of Konnersreuth, confirms the belief that

St. Paul was the first stigmatic"? Not one of the Greek Patristic commentators of the famous Galatians passage shows the faintest sign of any such exegesis. I have examined the evidence myself in connection with the entry *stigma* which I drew up for the forthcoming Lexicon of Patristic Greek. But a trance pronouncement of a modern stigmatic is supposed to "confirm" such an untenable view.

St. Teresa's Attitude

St. Teresa of Avila had a different outlook. When she was ordered by Our Lord in one of her visions to make another foundation she first consulted her director, generally without even telling him of the origin of her plan so as not to prejudice him in its favor. She writes in her *Book of the Foundations:*

"If a person is told to do anything, or the future is prophesied to her in a revelation, it is essential that she should discuss the matter with a discreet and learned confessor, and neither do nor believe anything but what that confessor tells her . . . And let her take this warning: if she does not obey the confessor in what he says, and allow herself to be guided by him, she is possessed either of an evil spirit or of a terrible melancholy. For supposing the confessor should be wrong, she will still be doing right in not departing from what he tells her, even were it an angel of God who had been speaking to her . . . It should be remembered that the weakness of our nature is very great, especially in women, and that it shows itself most markedly in this way of prayer; so it is essential that we should not at once suppose every little imagining of ours to be a vision" (ch.8).

It should be noted that St. Teresa stresses that the confessor must be learned and discreet; for if he were to be ignorant and credulous, it is to be feared that it would be a case of the blind guiding the blind. The Carmelite saint was a very shrewd woman, well acquainted with the weaknesses and wiles of her own sex, and with the influence these can often exercise on priests, whom she did not hesitate to tell that she knew her own sex better than they. Perhaps the most instructive case, and which might well serve as a warning against trusting too quickly in supposed miracles and revelations, is that of Nicole Tavernier, which is told in M. Helle's book. She lived at the end of the 16th century, and it was her misfortune to have met a true mystic, and a very sensible woman as well, in the person of Mme. Acarie, who remained singularly unimpressed by her ecstasies, visions, and even the many conversions she undoubtedly effected. Many ecclesiastical dignitaries had listened to

Nicole, and no less a personage than the Archbishop of Paris had at her behest proclaimed a public holiday for the capital and arranged a general procession round Notre Dame, in which took part the clergy and all the prominent citizens of Paris. Mme. Acarie, by a simple little feminine strategem which revealed sufficiently that the supposed saint was given to prying and telling lies, exposed the fraud.

It seems strange that the people most sceptical about mystical phenomena should be the true mystics themselves. A St. Teresa, a St. John of the Cross, a Mme. Acarie were not easily deceived, just because they knew that true mysticism does not consist in extraordinary experiences, but in an ever-deepening union with God, the fruit of which is increase in virtue and the gifts of the Holy Ghost. It is comparatively easy, not only for deliberate fraud, but also for a neurotic disposition, to fake visions, stigmata, revelations, or ecstasies; but it is impossible both for nature and for the devil to fake true charity, humility, wisdom. It is by these fruits that spirits are known. One cannot fail to be impressed, on reading Helle's chapters on the Curé d'Ars or on Lourdes, by the charity and wisdom of St. Jean-Baptiste Vianney and by the humility of St. Bernadette.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity. Against such there is no law" (Gal. 5. 22f.), says St. Paul, and, we may perhaps add, in the case of such there is no need for analyzing examinations. Where these are present there is holiness—where they are not, however many phenomena may astonish a credulous public, there is none.

East and West

The West has lost Christ; that is why it is dying.

The East is looking for Christ; that is why it is in revolt.

The crisis of the East comes from without, namely its revolt against the materialism of Western civilization. The crisis of the West comes from within, i.e., from its moral decline and loss of faith. The East struggles with the problem of existence; the West struggles with the problem of guilt. The first is common to people who have not found Christ; the second to those who have lost Him. The West can save the East only on condition that it regains the faith; the East can save itself only on condition that it embraces the faith.—Bishop Sheen in **Mission.**

Clerical Education in Art

The following, by Archbishop Celso Constantini, is a translation from the original Italian as found in "Osservatore Romano," *August 13, 1952. Father Michael Keene, O.S.B. of St. Meinrad's Abbey, is the translator. We are reprinting the article because of its timely interest and authority.—Editors.*

THE Instruction of the Holy Office concerning the proper education of the clergy in the matter of art is precise and complete. The question is asked: Why should the clergy be interested in art? We answer: For many reasons. We will mention the principal ones.

I. First of all, because it is commanded by ecclesiastical authority.

II. Because of the importance that art has in external worship.

III. Because of the responsibility that the clergy has in the preservation of historic edifices.

IV. Because the Church has ever been a glorious patron of the arts.

V. Finally, in order to be able to combat the scandal caused by the perversion of sacred art.

I. Ecclesiastical Authority

Here is the wording of the Instruction of the Holy Office:

"Those who teach should show themselves both respectful to venerable traditions and docile to the directions of the Holy See; accordingly, they should instruct candidates for the priesthood in sacred art during philosophy and theology according to the age and capacity of each one and they should imbue their students with a good practical sense of what is proper in sacred art."

The *"Ordinationes"* of the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities in the Apostolic Constitution *"Deus Scientiarum Dominus"* prescribed Church history, patrology, and Christian archeology among the principal subjects to be taught in theology; and among the special subjects it suggested questions chosen from Christian archeology and Christian art.

Earlier St. Charles Borromeo published an excellent manual on the building of churches; and Cardinal Federico compiled a valuable book on sacred painting. These publications, which derived from the 25th session of the Council of Trent, are aiding greatly in the beautifying of the churches of Lombardy.

II. Importance Of Art In External Worship

The precise regulations that God Himself gave to Moses and to Solomon in regard to the artistic adornment of the Sacred

You can't giv

to your altar boys, choir

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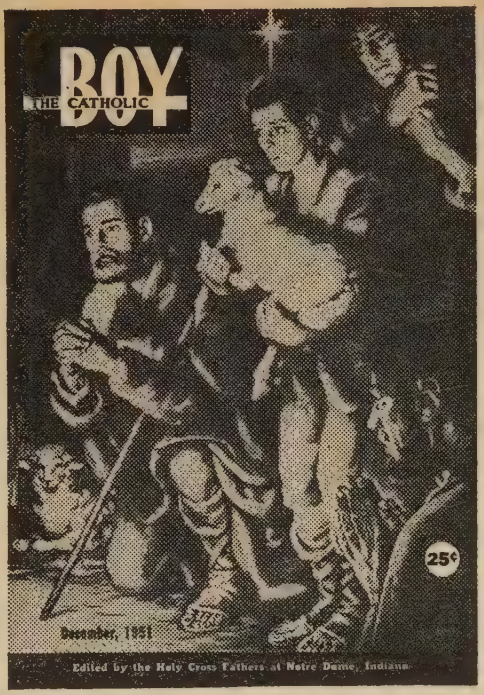

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Ark and the Temple of Jerusalem are well known.

Exodus relates (ch. xxxi, 2) how the Lord called Beseleel and "filled him with my divine spirit, making him wise, adroit, and skillful in every kind of craftsmanship; so that he can design whatever is to be designed in gold, silver, bronze, marble, precious stones, and woods of all sorts" (Knox's translation).

In all religions, art (just as literature, song, and drama) has offered its highest gifts to form the dwelling place of God and to adorn and embellish everything that is required for divine worship.

By the aid of the light of Revelation this confused, religious, artistic sentiment becomes an impulse of love and prayer, of song and poetry, a refuge for the soul, a consolation in sorrow, and joy in life. All of this is expressed in literature, music, liturgy and art.

Michelangelo once said: "There is nothing more noble nor more devotional than a good painting, because nothing evokes and arouses the devotion of the higher faculties to an equal degree as the difficulty of perfection. A good painting unites a man's faculties to God. The reason for this is that a good painting is nothing else than a copy of the perfection of God, and a reflection of the divine image, a music and a melody which only the intellect can apprehend, [although] not without difficulty. And such a painting is so rare that very few men are able to attain to its perfection."

It should be mentioned here that art in the Church has also a didactic purpose and is, as it were, a visible sermon. It is a language which speaks not to the ears, but to the eyes. In the ninth century the Council of Constantinople remarked (Can. 3): "That which a word expresses and commends in syllables, a painting expresses and commends equally well in colors." "Quae in syllabis sermo, haec et scriptura, quae in coloribus est, praedicat et commendat."

III. Responsibility Of The Clergy

The clergy is frequently accused of poor artistic taste and held responsible for the sale and loss of objects of art.

A certain antique dealer went about the country *"quaerens quem devoret,"* i.e., arranging for the exchange of old church furniture or used furnishings for gaudy new adornments. This was the occasion of distressing incidents and of certainly imprudent alienation of objects of art.

I will not dwell on this deplorable situation; fortunately, times have changed or are changing. One notices everywhere among the clergy a greater awareness and comprehension of art, and a lively

love for a renewed architecture and for the beautifying of the churches.

Actually the church is the mirror of the pastor. A church that is clean, free from all petty buying and selling, with furnishings, poor perhaps but in good taste, indicates the zeal, piety, and the mature artistic judgment of the pastor. It is an honor to him and to the entire Catholic clergy.

The Instruction of the Holy Office speaks of seminarians. They, too, to a great extent are destined to exercise their ministry in churches that are often national monuments. It is clearly proper then to give them a sufficient education in art so that they may more wisely fulfill their duties with regard to the care of these ancient monuments. Just as one teaches seminarians Church music, so also it is proper that they be given a good, at least summary, grounding in sacred art.

The laity zealous for the good name of the clergy and for the preservation and the beauty of sacred monuments, have understood the great importance of this special education. Mr. Maffii, in the *"Messaggero"* for the 30th of July of this year, wrote: "We would wish, if the proposition were not too bold on the lips of a layman, that seminaries, religious institutions, Catholic universities, and all institutions that prepare young men for the priesthood should instruct these future pastors properly in the history of art; and should give them a taste for harmony, not only in spiritual things, but also in those that are mundane.

"If priests were adequately prepared to discern true art from that which is borrowed and false, we would not see so many exhibitions of bad taste and vulgarity in our churches.

"Who knows but that, in a purified atmosphere, with a renewed vision of Life and Faith, there would arise on the morrow a pure, simple, mystical artist of sacred art; the lack of such an artist is the first real cause of the revulsion with which the present-day religious, artistic representations fill one."

IV. The Glorious Tradition Of The Church

St. Basil (329-379) made an important foundation, or better, a citadel of charity, near Caesarea. The church occupied the principal and most important place. Next to this was the bishop's house, which he wished to be near his sick and poor; and then came the buildings designated for the various ranks of the clergy, built in such a way as to offer generous accommodations. Clustered around the buildings for the care of the sick were the various trade workshops. Here, too, were found art studios; Basil knew that even those things

that are useful must be beautiful.

"The entire present life," says St. Basil, "is a preparation for the future life. This future life is rooted in the word of God found in the Sacred Scriptures which reveal it to us. But young men are not capable of understanding the Scriptures. Their intellect must be prepared by the study of the poets, the historians, and the philosophers. They thus become accustomed to discern truth at a distance; just as those who, having contemplated the sun's reflection in water, dare then to raise their eyes to the resplendent sun."

St. Jerome (347-420), wishing to console St. Heliodorus, Bishop of Altino, on the death of his nephew, Nepotian, a young priest, wrote: "By constant reading and daily meditation he made his mind a library of Christ. Nepotian took every precaution that the altar should always be exceptionally clean, that the furnishings of the church should be free of every trace of dust, the floor swept, the custodian at his place at the door, the sacristy immaculate, the sacred furniture shining; and, animated by the same pious zeal for everything relating to ecclesiastical ceremonies, he did not neglect any duty or obligation, whether of slight or of great importance. Whenever one sought him he was sure to be found in church . . . That philosophy is praised among the Greeks, according to whose tenets a man boasts that whatever he uses, even the ring on his finger and the mantel on his shoulders, is made by his own hands. We could give the same praise to Nepotian, who was wont to adorn the chapels in the church and the various altars of the martyrs with a profusion of flowers, with branches of trees and garlands of vines, so that everything in the church satisfied everyone's esthetic sense, as much by the art with which it was arranged as by its natural beauty. The whole was a witness of the labor and love of its priest."

In the early Middle Ages the Basilian monasteries in the East and the Benedictine monasteries in the West were the great centers of culture in which was held aloft not only the light of divine and human letters but also the flame of the arts. The literature of those times on art comes wholly from the cloisters—for example, the manuals of Mt. Athos, the *"Schedula diversarum artium,"* the *"Bestiarii,"* etc. In the monasteries there were artists' workshops for miniature designers, copyists, painters, workers in stone and glass, artisans of every kind. On the scholastic level were taught the great traditions in architecture and the technique of the various trades. Here we must mention at least Monte Cassino and Cluny.

It is equally well known that the greater number of masterpieces of Christian Art at the time of the Renaissance was due to the patronage of the Church and to the cordial relations of the artists with the Cardinals, the Bishops, the religious, the Priests, and heads of the confraternities.

Now, at the distance of so many centuries, and in conditions of life so diverse, we, heirs of such a glorious past, cannot indeed equal those ecclesiastical patrons of yesteryear, but we must show ourselves at least understanding heirs and loving guardians of the monuments which our fathers have left us.

V. The Scandal Of Bad Art

It is necessary that the clergy, following the "Instruction" of the Holy Office should form a clear and determined attitude to combat the scandalous progress of bad sacred art. In France, Germany, Belgium and elsewhere, religious and young priests, and rich, illustrated reviews have burned much incense to the latest form of Christian art. In architecture one often finds a jansenistic and Protestant nudism, which would remove the Blessed Sacrament from the high altar and reserve it in a choir chapel or elsewhere.

It is necessary that the clergy, without letting themselves become infatuated with the incantations of novelty, should react vigorously against this modernistic art. It is a form of the subtle jansenist heresy which is trying to penetrate our churches.

"There was a time," a religious wrote to me, "when the Holy See was wont to bridle in this field any exaggerations and puerility, which are so much the more to be regretted in that even priests, otherwise worthy and serious, have lost their heads in this matter, forgetting the essential purpose of sacred and Christian art, which is to draw souls to the Lord by e d u c a t i n g and instructing them."

An artist wrote me: "The situation is clearly one of a struggle, of a fight to the finish and further. We have been retreating (already too much if we have yielded). We must answer the blows which have been struck, and more, take the offensive, as a good rule of warfare. The great mass of the public is with us and wishes absolutely to hear nothing more of the aberrations and grossness of modern art."

De Chirico a few days ago wrote in the *Giornale d'Italia:* "The 'affairs' of the modernists go from bad to worse. Despite the fact that they are united in what might be called an international secret society, despite the fact that they have intensified their propaganda, despite the fact that they are or-

ganized just like a political party with their agents almost everywhere: in the various branches of government, in the museums and state galleries, in the schools, in the universities, in the columns of the daily papers, etc., despite all this, 'modernistic art' is going down, is losing its force, is declining. It is even losing its ability to scandalize. People are tired of it. The public is aroused, and, what is more, is showing its displeasure. It is becoming intolerant of those individuals who wish to strangle everything that the public loves and admires and at the same time wishes to extol to the seventh heaven everything which pertains to their own modernistic group. Modernistic pseudo-art is in ruins. The modernists realize that their grand bluff has been called."

Once there was shown to me a twisted bolt of iron which was supposed to represent a saint. Just recently in *Il Tempo* the artist and art critic, Virgilio Guzzi, although inclined to favor certain new artistic designs, denounced the inversion of traditional values in art. "Sculpture," writes Reed, when presenting certain young British artists at the biennial exhibit at Venice, "has taken on a form never before seen, a lineal, cursive form. Its media are wood, and metal strips, rope and wire, rather than a solid mass . . . That is to say, the media of this art are not those materials which can specifically express all that is proper to the art of sculpture. Our compatriot Martini was right when he wrote that sculpture was dead. Actually it does not know just what it is."

And Francia has recently written as follows in *Il Popolo:* "We have here, in reality, a deliberate exclusion of natural forms, a conscious, iconoclastic attitude (as if the human form had not of itself that completeness and true beauty which they are seeking); this indicates without any doubt the view of the new School . . . But here also the crisis is about man rather than about esthetics; it is a crisis of the concept of man. I would dare to say that the forms expressed in neo-realism are not art in the ordinary meaning of the term, in the meaning in which they, followers of Hegel or not, intend; an external reality which manifests an esthetic concept."

Conclusion: Is Sacred Art Dead?

A daily paper favorable to the Communists, commenting on this "Instruction" of the Holy Office on art, says: "The truth is that only a very small part, and that not the better part, of modern culture has remained bound to the Church; the latter no longer holds the position of patron and judge which she once held . . . Sacred Art has perished . . . And how can one speak of Sacred Art among the artists of today when

they are no longer interested in religious problems? . . . The Church, considering the struggle in which she is engaged, can never make use of modern art, since this art has been born under a distinctly progressive and lay leadership which does not lend itself to Catholic ideology. To save itself the Church must make use of that which is obsolete and superseded, and this is true not only in the field of art."

This tirade smacks of that rhetoric which a century and a half ago applauded the "goddess of reason" enthroned on an altar in Paris; it is worthy of the answer which a peasant gave to an enlightened atheist: "You are a fine talker, but I will believe you when you succeed in knocking the stars out of the heavens."

A socialist, who a few years ago put the Glad Tidings into verse form, concludes his poem with this appeal to Christ:

"O flower of heroes, Christ, remain."

As long as there will be tears in the world, eyes will turn to Christ, the divine and only Comforter, Who has given meaning to life and to death. And art, art at its best, consecrates itself at the foot of the altar. It is of little moment that a few artists are estranged from the Church. They shall pass away, and the Church remains. She will always be ready to say a prayer at their grave.

To My Confreres

The "Instruction" has come at an opportune time. "With this document from the Holy Office, there has begun the fight for a sacred art, purified on the one hand of artistic extremism, and on the other, of bad taste; clamorous and fiercely polemical in the first case, silent and discreet in the second."

In fact, as I have already mentioned, there is noticeable in a large section of the clergy, a new fervor for the preservation or the redecoration or the renovation of the old edifices (monuments) and a new solicitude for building churches that are refreshingly decorated and airy, true houses of God, adorned with that parsimony and that aristocratic sense which is recommended by the "Instruction."

Dear Confreres, art, for us, is a form of our ministry, a valuable aid for enhancing the sacred liturgy.

Daily, as we go up to the altar, we say the holy words: "Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuae" (Ps. 25).

In this period of crisis let us work with renewed ardor according to the mind of Holy Church to live our sacred calling.

People seldom improve when they have no other model but themselves to copy after.—**Oliver Goldsmith.**

Code and Cult

J. F. Marbach, J.C.D.

Questions may be submitted to the editors

It is probably just a negative scruple but doesn't Canon 867.4 (concerning the time when Holy Communion may be distributed), combined with Canon 821.2 (which allows the parochial Midnight Mass for Christmas), seem to forbid distributing Holy Communion at the Christmas Midnight Mass?

The Pontifical Code Commission on March 16, 1936, declared that these Canons are so to be understood that Holy Communion may be distributed at the Christmas Midnight Mass. It added however that the Ordinary can for just reasons in particular cases prohibit the giving of Holy Communion at this Mass, according to Canon 869.—*Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* XXVIII (1936), 178.

A soldier home on furlough claims he is free from the law of abstinence on Friday while he is home; is he correct?

Yes, he has a privilege that is personal to the soldiers, not limited to their military establishment. The servicemen are free from the laws of fast and abstinence except on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, the forenoon of Holy Saturday, and the Vigil of Christmas.

What was the most recent decree of the Holy See about the Rotary Clubs?

The Cardinals of the Holy Office, on Dec. 20, 1950, answered the question as to whether Catholics may join the Rotary Club by decreeing briefly as follows:

"Clericis non licere nomen dare Associationi 'Rotary Club' vel eiusdem coeibus interesse; laicos vero hortandos esse ut servent praescriptum can. 684 C.I.C."

This decree was approved by the Pope on Dec. 26, 1950, and issued by the Holy Office on January 11, 1951.—*Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* XLIII (1951, 91.)

Thus the decree refers primarily to clerics, that they should not join the Rotary or attend their meetings; the laity are reminded that they should rather join the many associations in the Church.

Do the rules for the Eucharistic Fast allow any concessions to nurses on night duty in hospitals, or to other night workers?

No such concessions are granted in the common law of the Church. However, on April 28, 1952, Pope Pius XII gave to the Bishops of the United States a special faculty for three years whereby the Bishops may dispense those who work after midnight.

The Bishop must either grant the dispensation himself in individual cases or must subdelegate this power to the priests of his diocese. The Archbishop of one archdiocese did so subdelegate this general power to all the priests who have the faculties of the archdiocese, and issued the following regulations:

"Only those may be dispensed who habitually work after midnight. The dispensation is restricted in its use to Sundays, holydays of obligation, and one other day in any week; moreover it can be used only on those days when the preceding night has been devoted to work. Those dispensed are required to abstain from solid food and alcoholic beverages from midnight, and from liquids (other than alcoholic) for one hour before receiving Holy Communion. This is a definite restriction on the Indult previously enjoyed which permitted the eating of solid foods up until four hours before receiving. The present Indult permits only the taking of non-alcoholic liquids after midnight. These may be taken up until one hour before receiving."

Thus in each case in this particular archdiocese each priest grants a particular dispensation from the common law concerning the Eucharistic Fast—within the limits of the above special faculty.

While communicating this sub-delegation to his priests to ease their work with the laity, the Archbishop also expressly granted a dispensation to nursing Brothers and Sisters so that they may receive even daily as often as they have spent the preceding night in the care of the sick—this was a special concession granted by the Pope through the Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments in this special Indult for the Bishops of the United States for three years (Rescript N. 3090/52).

An Eastern Orthodox man married a Jewish girl; they were divorced; now the man wishes to marry one of my parishioners. Is there any possibility in this case?

According to the ancient custom of the Church, the Eastern Orthodox were considered bound by the diriment impediment of disparity of cult, and the new marriage laws for the Catholic Eastern Churches (effective May 2, 1949) did not limit the impediment of disparity of cult to only marriages involving a Catholic—Canon 60 of this Code. Thus for these cases involving disparity of cult the date of the marriage is not important.

All success in these cases depends on the proof of non-baptism of the other party. Present this case as soon as possible to your marriage tribunal (do not secure any affidavits before consulting them). This type of

case need not be sent to the Holy See.

If the Eastern Orthodox man is a Ukrainian Orthodox, the case should be sent to the respective Ukrainian Chancery; otherwise the Latin Tribunal can judge the case.

What is the "Montana Case," also called the "Petrine Privilege" and the "Privilegium Fidei"?

I hesitate to give even a brief summary of this special case because it is not allowed to discuss this case publicly.

Perhaps it will suffice to answer that you should not even *begin* convert-instructions to any divorced non-Catholic without first presenting the marriage case to your marriage tribunal.

May a non-Catholic ever be a godparent? Any exceptions?

No— and there are no exceptions. Canon 765.2 decrees that for the validity of the "godparenthood," the person must not be a non-Catholic. The practice of allowing a non-Catholic to be a "witness" while letting him think that he is a godparent seems a serious abuse, and a cause of scandal.

Is there a Patron Saint for immigrants?

St. Francis Xavier Cabrini has been declared the Patroness of immigrants — Apostolic Letter, *"Superiore iam aetate,"* Sept. 8, 1950—*Acta Apostolicae* Sedis, XLIII (1951), 455-456.

Does a professed religious, according to the norm of Canon 580.2, need the permission of the Holy See in order to change the grant or management of at least a notable part of his temporal goods in favor of his religious group?

Yes, replied the Pontifical Code Commission, May 15, 1936 —*Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* XXV-III (1936), 210.

A non-Catholic girl living in my parish (Detroit) is going to Chicago and there she will marry a Catholic man whose home is in Boston. They are both coming here first for the prenuptial instructions and the signing of the promises. To which Chancery shall I send the petition for the dispensation— Detroit, Chicago, or Boston?

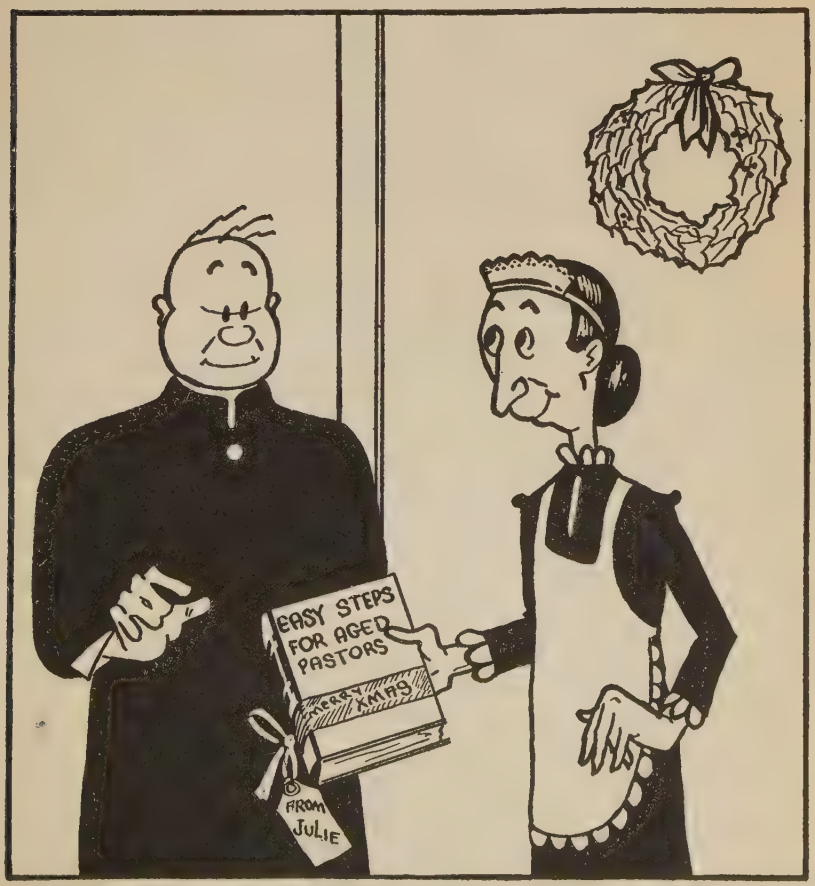
The Bishop of the Catholic party is the one to grant a dispensation ordinarily. Thus, if there is time, you should send the petition to the Boston Chancery. I presume that the man intends to return to Boston to live, that he has not given up his home there.

If there is not enough time, you might telephone your Chancery while the Catholic man is physically present in your rectory, and they may judge that they may grant the dispensation while the Catholic party is physically present in the diocese.

Another solution is this. You

might give the girl the usual pre-nuptial instructions, have her sign her part of the promises, then forward the petition to the parish priest of the Catholic man in Boston for the signing of his promises; the Boston priest can then secure the rescript of dispensation from his Chancery and forward it to the priest who will perform the wedding ceremony.

JULIE---Or Housekeepers are Hard to Get



Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21, 1952

Adequate Preparation for Christmas

IN a few days we shall celebrate the coming of Christ into this world. What proportion of our preparation for Christmas has been spiritual preparation? The Church knows how easily we become absorbed in the natural joys of this world. That is why she recalls, in today's Gospel, how John, the son of Zachary, prepared the hearts and souls of the Jewish people for the promised Messiah. God knows that we, like the people of our Lord's time, often forget that Christ is here and wants to come into our hearts.

Development

When Christ was about to publicly announce the good news, He sent John the Baptist to prepare the way. John came out of the desert and went into all the regions about the Jordan "preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."

This was not the sacrament of baptism. That was instituted later by Christ. The baptism that John preached and administered was a washing to indicate one's change of mind. It was a washing to indicate a man's good will, to show that he had given up his sinful outlook and now desired forgiveness of his sins. It was a symbol of humility and submission to God which helped the spirit of penance and contrition. In this way John made "ready the way of the Lord," made "straight his paths."

John saw that the people of his time had a lot of straightening out to do; he minced no words about their taking themselves in hand. The passage of St. Luke that follows today's Gospel gives us the words John spoke to the crowds that went out to be baptized by him. He said, "Brood of vipers! Who has shown you how to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits befitting repentance. . ."

He told the well-to-do to share their clothes and food with the poor. He instructed the tax-gatherers to collect no more than was due.

To the soldiers he said, "Plunder no one, neither accuse anyone falsely, and be content with your pay" (Luke 3:10-14).

Obviously we, too, must prepare in a spiritual way for the coming of Christ this Christmas. God says

to each of us this morning, "Every valley should be filled, every mountain brought low. Make straight the crooked ways; and the rough ways smooth.".

This is to say we have to make up for our deficiencies in the spiritual life; cut away all sin, especially the mountain of serious sin. Remove dishonesty; level off your dealings with others; be just and charitable. Be sorry for your sins and do fitting penance. Remove all obstacles to the grace of God, "that all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

Conclusion

Be not deaf and blind as the Jews to whom John was a "voice crying in the desert." God spoke through John because He wanted to call a people far removed from His favor. Often God has called us, and we paid no more heed than did the faithless Jews. Today He calls us by the voice of conscience, by the voice of interior grace. He speaks to our minds and hearts in many ways. He reminds us of our solemn obligations, our duties; He warns us to quit sinful thoughts, habits, associations, and the like. For He desires to come into our heart on Christmas morning. So prepare to receive Him. Then you need have no fear of the future.

The Sunday After Christmas

December 28, 1952

Mary Presents Her Son to God

THE presentation of Jesus in the Temple cost Mary very much. Every child is dear to its mother. Jesus was especially dear to Mary, for she is unique in having conceived, formed, and brought forth her Son without any human cooperation. Mary conceived and brought forth her Son through the power of God alone.

Then came the time to fulfill the Jewish Law which required that a mother come to the temple for the ceremony of purification and for the purpose of presenting her child to the Lord. In case the child was a first-born boy, the Law also required that an offering be made to the Lord by which he would be bought back from the service of the altar and the priestly life. For according to ancient legislation all first-born males belonged to the Lord and had to be set aside for the service of the Temple. This primitive law had proved to be too great a strain on families; so it was mitigated.

Therefore, when our Lord was forty days old, Mary took him to the Temple, submitted to the ceremony of purification and made the offering of the poor for the exchange of her Son. In her case this was not necessary, but she fulfilled the Law so that there would be no cause for accusation of having neglected or violated the Law.

As children of Mary we ought to imitate her generosity. We ought to surrender completely to God's will in every detail of our lives. Simeon said, "Behold this child is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be contradicted."

Development

Christ came to save all of us. But some people do not look for salvation, do not want salvation, even oppose the saving of others. This is one of the sorrows that pierced Mary's heart: in spite of her Son's suffering, in spite of her suffering, some would not be her children. See to it, then, that you always remain a devoted child of Mary. Renounce your own will; obey all the laws of God.

Children obey your parents and your teachers. Parents see to it that your children have a deep respect for the expression of God's will even when this comes to them from authorities outside your home.

And consider it a great honor if God asks your child for the service of the Mystical Body of Christ as a priest or a nun. Offer up your flesh and blood as generously as Mary did in the Temple and on Calvary.

Conclusion

"Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be given you besides" (Matt. 6:33). Let your will, like Mary's, have one single purpose: to forget yourself and to seek God alone. God will not be slow to give Himself to the soul that generously follows Mary. For our Mother Mary leads us to her divine Son. Then we will say with St. Paul, "I have suffered the loss of all things, and I count them as dung that I may gain Christ. . ." (Phil. 3:8).

Sunday After The Circumcision

January 4, 1953

Live For the Glory of Jesus

THE birth of a new year reminds us of all that happened during the old. 1952 brought sacrifices, illness, crosses, and all of the things human nature is heir to. But it also brought wonderful compensations: the blessings of family life, sons and daughters; the blessings of experience, of learning, of love; and all the blessings of our religion. Yes, we have had a glorious privilege in living through 1952 with Christ Jesus. Now we should be thrilled as we stand alive at the opening of a new year! For with the new year we have a fresh opportunity to live for the glory of Jesus, our Saviour, our Lord and God.

Development

During 1953 there are three ways that we can live for the glory of our Lord. One way is to praise Him. This should be an easy thing

to do. Just ask yourself, "Why should I praise Jesus?" At once the answer comes back, "He certainly deserves it!" He is our Saviour; that is what His name means, "Saviour." Jesus is God-Man; God became man and died to save us. So Jesus, Whose name means "Saviour," gave to that name and its idea a new and divine depth of meaning that it never had before. He deserves our praise, too, because He goes on saving us day after day in spite of our repeated, miserable mistakes.

Jesus also deserves our praise because He is our God.

We can praise Him, too, by seeing His loving hand in all the events that come into our life. Everything that happens to us — a broken ankle, our latest raise in pay, the rain on our wedding day —everything is provided by an all-wise and loving Father. Try, then, to see God's love in everything His Providence arranges for you.

Here is a second way that we can live for the glory of Christ Jesus during the new year. It is to beg Him to provide for our needs.

Finally, there is a third and perhaps more difficult way of living the new year for the glory of our Lord. It is the way of good example. Our Lord Himself taught us this way when He told us, "Let your light shine before men, in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Mt. 5:15).

Conclusion

Ours is a great privilege: to live another year for the glory of Jesus our God and Saviour. So during 1953 recognize and praise His infinite perfection, beg Him to help us, and especially live Christianity for the world to see. This last is the best way to give glory to our Lord, for it makes us "other Christs." Then we, too, become "saviours"; we give glory to Jesus by bringing others within the saving influence of His grace.

Sunday Within the Octave of the Epiphany

January 11, 1953

Christ Shows Himself to Us

THIS week we are celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany of our Lord. The word "Epiphany" means "Showing"; so today we are celebrating the showing, the appearance, the manifestation of our Lord. To whom did our Lord show Himself on this day? To you! Of course, at first, on Christmas, He showed Himself to His own people. Later, on this day He showed Himself to the Gentiles, to you, in the persons of the Three Kings who came from the East.

Why did our Lord show Himself? To indicate that we must pay to be Christians, to follow Him. Anyone can look at Christ as He appeared to the Three Kings and discover what it cost Christ

Himself. The Three Kings saw a little baby in the arms of Mary His mother. They saw that God had emptied Himself to become man. God took our human nature with all the humiliations and suffering it would bring Him in order to show Himself to us. He is trying to tell us that if we are going to keep the commandments, if we are going to follow Him, we will have to pay a price. His Epiphany tells us that if you are going to be faithful to your wife, if you intend to remain pure, sober, and honest, it is going to cost you something; you will have to deny yourself.

Development

But Christ also shows Himself to us in order to attract us. In our everyday search for things that fill our natural needs we do not buy without knowing what we are getting. We want to know what we are paying for. We look over that new suit, that new automobile. And we pick out a suit and a car that attracts us. This implies that we first let its goodness appeal to us. Now our Lord has shown Himself to us as most appealing. He says, "If you follow Me, you will win possession of God Himself for all eternity." His life is not all suffering. He rose gloriously and ascended into heaven. On the road to Emmaus He told two of His disciples, "Did not the Christ have to suffer these things before entering into His glory?" (Luke, 24:26)

Do you have difficulty paying the price of Christianity? Does the self-denial that Christ demands seem like too high a price to pay? Perhaps you have not allowed our Lord to attract you! He indicates today that He desires to show Himself to you. Why not let His good qualities, His power, His personality attract you?

Do you ever think of reading the story of His life in the New Testament? Do you follow these parts of His life that come up in the Mass by using a Missal? Do you ever stop to consider some part of our Lord's life in a prayerful way? Do you allow Christ in His sacraments to attract you with the power of His grace? He personally dwells with us in the Holy Eucharist. Do you receive Him often in order to let His goodness attract you? Finally remember that our following of Christ is not to be done alone. He is trying to help us all along the way if we just let Him.

Conclusion

We all want the reward of heaven, the peace and happiness of possessing God for all eternity. Christ came to show us what this reward would cost, but also to manifest God to us in an appealing way so that we would follow Him and obtain our eternal reward. Then let the power of divinity attract you. And today, especially after the Consecration of the Mass, kneel devoutly and worship God really present on our altar. When the Magi "saw the star they rejoiced exceedingly. And entering the house, they found the Child with Mary His mother, and falling down they worshipped Him." Their faith went beyond the swaddling clothes of a baby; they fell down to worship God! Soon God will be showing Himself to you under the appearances of bread. And He will be asking that you, too, fall down and worship Him.

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Where the Town Begins
Wild Palms

MISCELLANEOUS

Artist Model
Case of the Cancelled Redhead
Cellar Club
Come Night—Come Desire
Confessions of a Hat-Check Girl
Dagger of Flesh
Dance Hall Girl
Four Dames Named Sin
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Gin Wedding
Her Candle Burns Hot
Innocent Wanton
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Lay Down and Die
Lida Lynn
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List prepared by the Chicago Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women.

The list may be obtained from Our Sunday Visitor, Huntington, Indiana. Individual subscription is 75c per year. Copies of the list in quantity are priced at 1c each.

Here's an oddity: It is possible for an airplane to fly lower than a submarine can dive. The Sea of Galilee, where planes land, is 680 feet below sea level, far beyond the record depth of undersea boats.—**Irish Catholic.**

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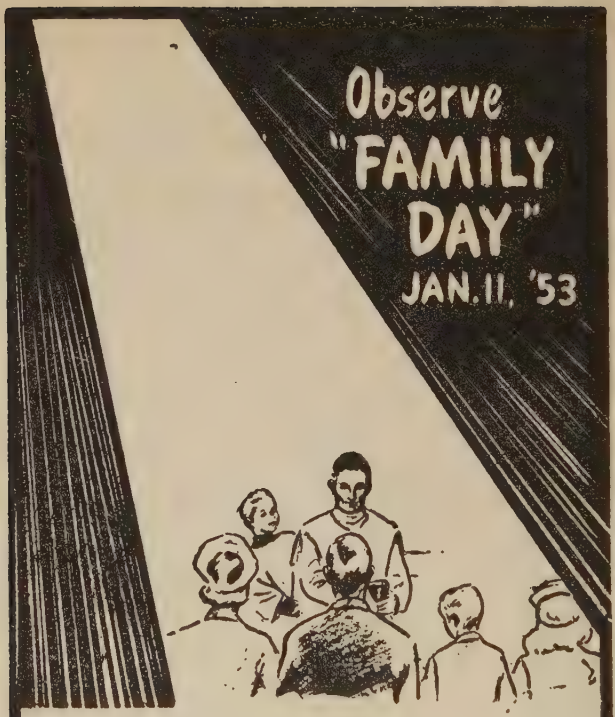

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Book Reviews

The Man on a Donkey, a Chronicle

by H. F. M. Prescott

Macmillan, New York, 1952, pp. 627

PERHAPS the standards and ideals of no literary form have suffered a decline so marked as those of the historical novel. Each new one is greeted by some of the critics with their most brilliant sallies of wit at its absurdities; by others with silence. But Miss Prescott's novel has received the respect and praise due to a historical novel written in the best traditions of that *genre*.

Her theme has the advantage of being one that appeals to all men: a people rising to defend what they love and value, The Pilgrimage of Grace, the last stand of Catholicism in England. Miss Prescott has the further advantage of knowing this period thoroughly not only in the broad sweep of its policies and their effects but also in the tiny, unimportant facts that are taken for granted in daily living. And she has the imagination to blend them both into a vivid picture of the early days of the English Reformation.

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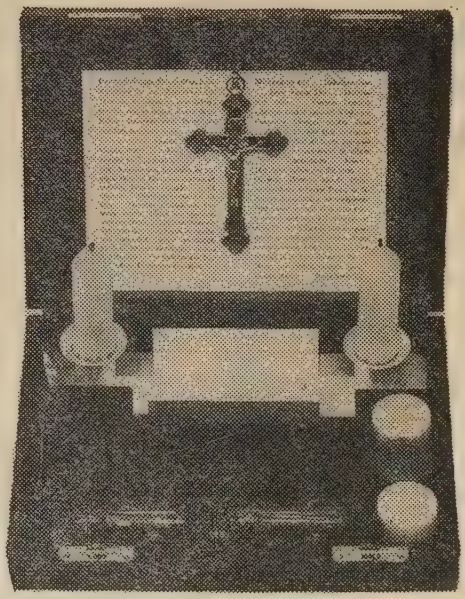

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Book Reviews

With Lord Darby we watch ecclesiastical England making the compromises by which it was giving the Church into Henry's hands. With him, too, we watch the younger generation fall under the spell of Henry and in him glorify the state in a way their grandfathers would have laughed to scorn.

And with Lord Darcy and with Robert Aske we share a growing resentment over the methods by which Thomas Cromwell is destroying the Faith and making Henry into an absolute monarch. Consequently, it is with bitterness that we return to hall and farm to share the hopeless defeat after the king's lying promises have dispersed the Pilgrimage, or gather in York to watch the horrible death of Aske who led us in the fight for what we love and value.

And our sympathies have been most subtly engaged. For the chronicle form, in which the novel is written, brings us into palace and castle, hall and priory, town house and farm. It soon accustoms us to the way of life in each of these places and, before we are aware of it, we are at home in them.

Miss Prescott has a way with the minutiae of daily living and she readily evokes in us a familiarity with the rustle of cloth, the smell of the herbs underfoot, the way the smoke blows about the room, the sound of the rain on a window. We live with the weather, the food, the yard smells; we grow conversant with the petty interests of the cloister and the kitchen, known only to the inmates of the places. Not many pages pass before we are thoroughly at home and deeply in-

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volved in all that goes on at Marrich Priory, York Castle, the King's palace, and Machyn's house in London.

It is not until we have turned in horror from the sight of Robert Aske dying in chains high above the busy streets of York that we stand back from this book in order to consider what we have lived through. It is only then that we count the cost of each compromise made so wisely to win peace and survival. It is only then that the sacrifice of Robert Aske appears in contrast to the hollow thing for which he was dying.

Miss Prescott has convincingly brought to life that startling historical fact: in a brief period of twenty years, a nation was shorn of its Faith and its rights with hardly a hand raised in their defense. She has written with a rare and deep understanding of the facts of history. And her scholarship has been touched by a power of imagination and a beauty of style to result in one of the finest historical novels this reviewer has ever read. —John P. McManus, S.S., St. Edward's Seminary, Kenmore, Wash.

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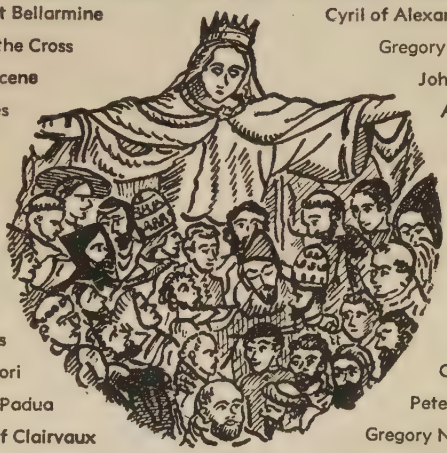

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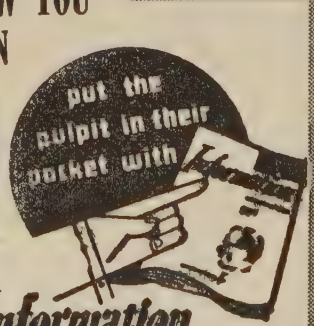

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Continued from page 896

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Correspondence

Christmas Suggestion

Editor:

SOON you will be reminded: "Only twenty shopping days left until Christmas." Shop-keepers will soon begin their preparations. Shop windows will be decorated in festive red and green. Classrooms will be used as rehearsal stages for the annual Christmas play about the benevolent misers and orphaned children. Vacant lots will soon be stacked with fir and holly trees. Business will be geared to a high pitch in the next few weeks. Ash trays and costume jewelry, whistles and trains, ties and scarfs will be plugged as the ideal Christmas gifts. Buses and commuter trains will be jammed with Christmas shoppers loaded down with bundles. Neighbors will get chummy again over a liquid gift papa received from an admirer at the office. Closets bearing Christmas gifts will be locked from coast to coast. Suddenly like a bolt out of the blue it will be Christmas Eve. Thus America gets ready to celebrate Christmas in truly American fashion.

Amidst this kind of preparation for Christmas, the conscientious pastor wishes there were less of the material and more of the spiritual, less of Santa Claus and more of Christ. With him there is hardly a priest who is not conscious of the expanding materialism that enshrouds the year's most enthusiastic feast. Yet if there is so much

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materialism and paganism dominating the preparation for Christmas, it will accomplish nothing to merely bemoan the inescapable fact. Something in a positive way ought to be done to counteract the trend of taking Christ out of His Christmas.

A Christmas Novena

Why not a public novena in preparation for the Feast of Christmas? Why not a spiritual preparation to counteract the material preparation that now dominates the Feast? Why not a service every afternoon for children so that in addition to dreaming of what Santa Claus will bring them, they will have some thought of the Christ Child and what He has already brought them? Why not confessions every afternoon and evening to afford our people the chance to fittingly prepare for Christmas? Since the message of Peace on Earth to Men of Good Will was never needed more, why not a series of sermons each evening on this theme in preparation for Christmas?

The answer to this Christmas suggestion may be: My people will be busy with their shopping and will not attend; my people are not interested in this kind of thing at Christmas! Wherever a Christmas

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Holy Cross Parish in St. Louis, Mo., and Holy Child Parish in Richmond Hill, N. Y., are two shining examples of the enthusiasm people have for the Christmas Novena. It might accomplish a great deal in any parish in counteracting the trend that is making Christmas merely a merchants' holiday. It will not only afford people the chance to properly prepare for Christmas, but if it is properly conducted, you will discover that the people like the idea very much.

Clement Buckley, C.P.
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'Thank You, Fathers'

Editor:

A NOTE to say "Thank you" for my letter of appeal which appeared in your October issue—"Literature For Africa." I'd be grateful if you would add a P.S. to note my change of address. I was posted to Zaria after our retreat and not Minna as I expected.

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The Hymnal

Editor:

WE have just read the editorial in THE PRIEST entitled "A National Hymnal."

In response to the invitation to offer suggestions and comment, we wish to state that the decision of the Commission to publish a small book to contain only about 100 hymns is a keen disappointment! We had been looking forward to the day when the Catholics of our country would have a beautiful volume containing the hundreds of fine hymns which are our heritage. A book of such small proportions will definitely defeat its own purpose since it cannot possibly contain enough hymns for any one season or occasion to be adequate. Consequently in two or three years, those of us who like variety would be compelled to search in other books for the good hymns that have been omitted. The plan to make additions from time to time will only engender confusion among members of a group, all of whom may not have the latest enlarged edition. The anticipated "additions" should be incorporated in the hymnal now, so that a revision will not be necessary for a long time.

Furthermore, we are not in ac-

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Henry S. Kawalec
Catholic Choirmasters Guild
Buffalo, New York

Needs Books and Stipends

Editor:

I SHALL be deeply grateful if any of your subscribers can send me books of sermons, meditations, and spiritual reading, as well as some Mass intentions, since it is extremely difficult to get them here.

Sincerely yours in Jesus,
A. C. Pinto
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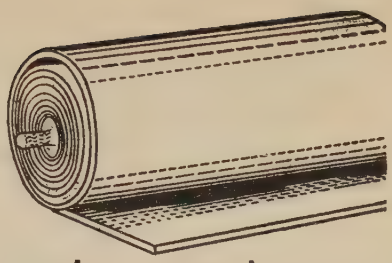

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Correspondence

Pastoral Note on Baptism

Editor:

IN most churches, the water remaining on the person's head after baptism is removed by a cloth. (The rubrics do not speak of a "towel.")

It is very probable that some of the oil in this water is also absorbed by the towel when the priest dries the head.

Our Holy Mother the Church directs that the cotton or other material used in removing the Holy Oils, out of respect, be burned and the ashes placed in the sacrarium.

Now surely we don't burn the baptismal towel, but it is usually thrown into the hamper with the soiled altar linens.

This does not seem to comply with the utmost reverence and care the Church wants us to show to the Holy Oils.

Here is what I would venture to suggest (I have been doing it myself): Use a cleansing tissue for this "towel," e.g. Kleenex. Thus is provided a disposable "cloth" which can be burned, a separate clean towel (where there are many e.g. converts), and less altar laundry.

This might apply to all occasions where the Holy Oils are used, e.g., the solemn blessing of the font, Confirmation, etc.

Sincerely,

B. W. C.

New York City

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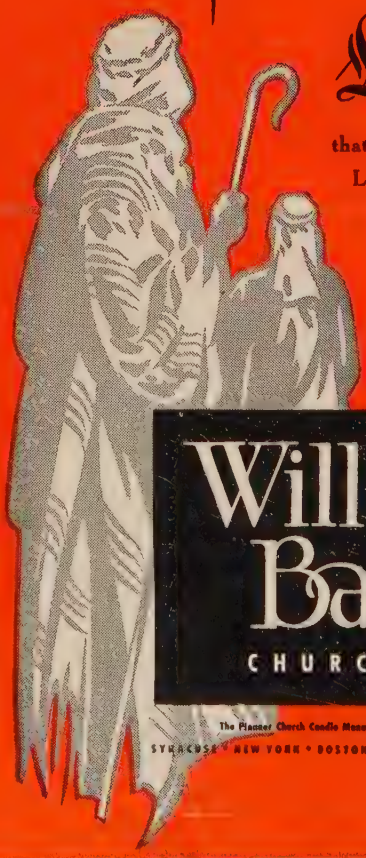
Let us go over to Bethlehem,
and see this thing
that has come to pass, which the
Lord has made known to us.
St. Luke 2:15



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